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Insights into hours worked, June 2021

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 **Source:** [Labour Force, Australia, June 2021](#)

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The ABS previously indicated its intention to cease publishing this article every month after the May 2021 issue (on 17 June 2021), and to only publish future updates as needed. Given the lockdown in Victoria in June and the current lockdown in Greater Sydney, the ABS intends to continue to publish further articles each month until changes in hours worked series return to pre-COVID conditions.

Hours worked and employment

Hours worked decreased by 1.8% (in seasonally adjusted terms) between May and June 2021, while employment increased by 0.2% or 29,100 people. The 1.8% fall followed an increase of 1.4% in May and reflected a large fall in hours worked in Victoria (8.4%) in June, which coincided with the lockdown that began on 28 May.

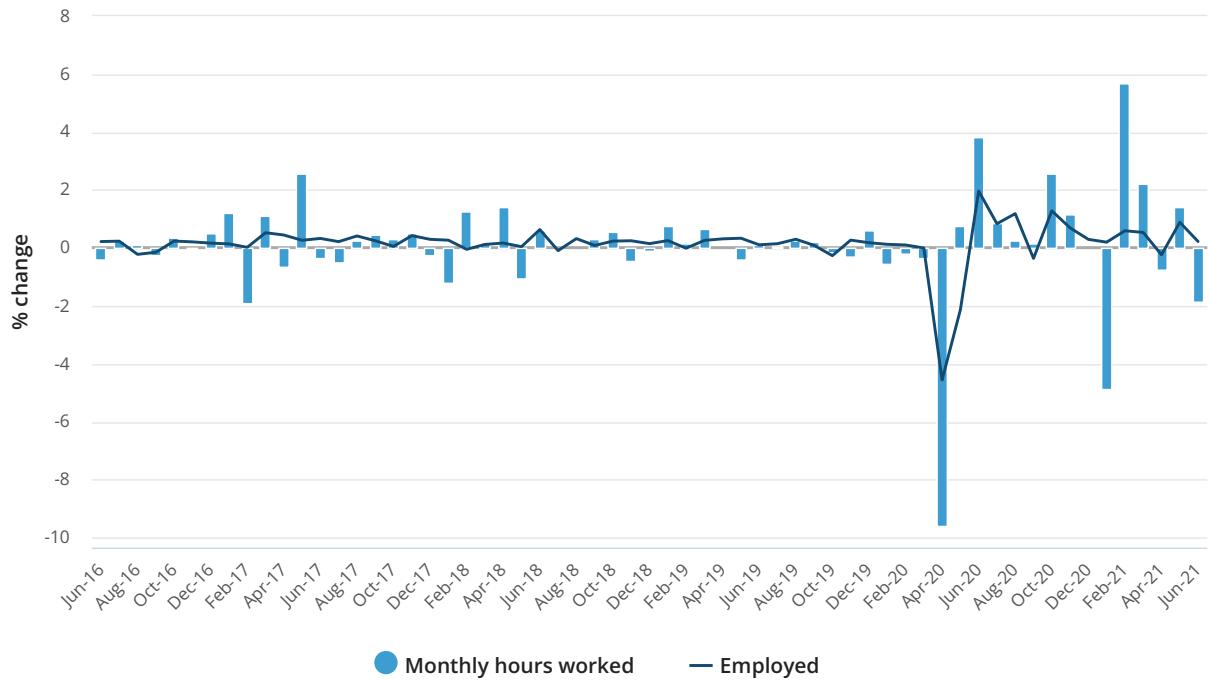
Chart 1 shows changes in hours worked and employment, indexed to March 2020, while Chart 2 shows monthly changes in hours worked and employment since May 2016.

Chart 1: Hours worked and employment index, Seasonally adjusted (March 2020 = 100.0)



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

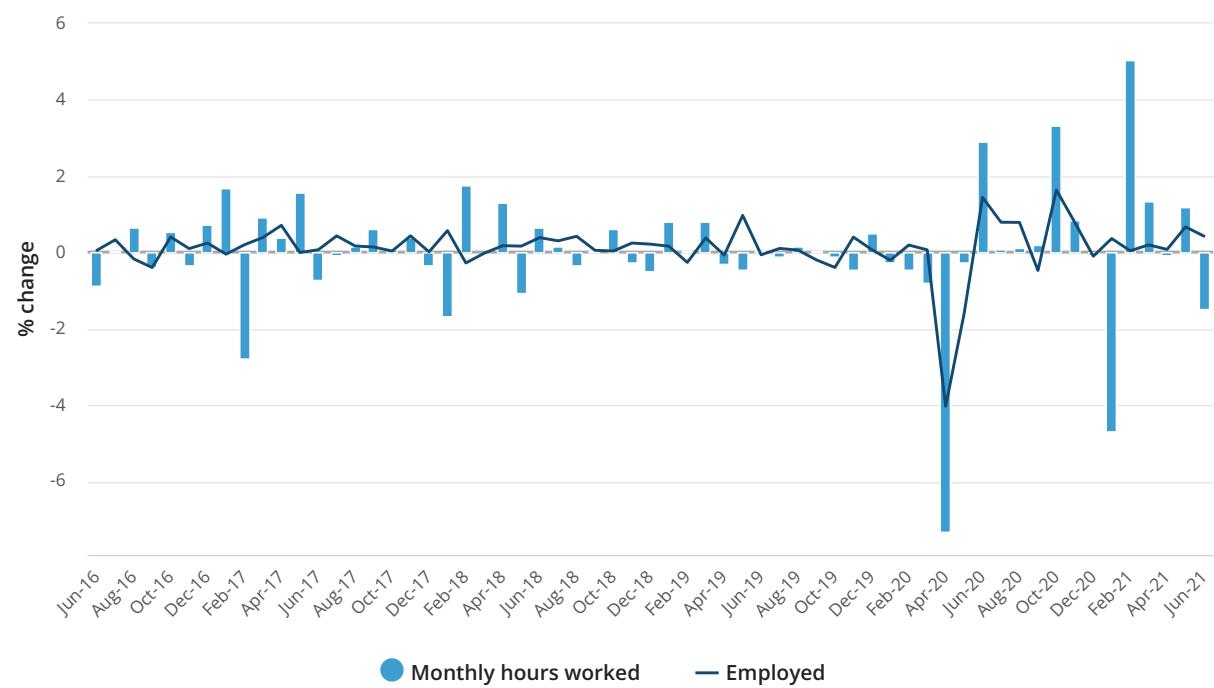
Chart 2: Monthly change in employment and hours worked, Seasonally adjusted



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

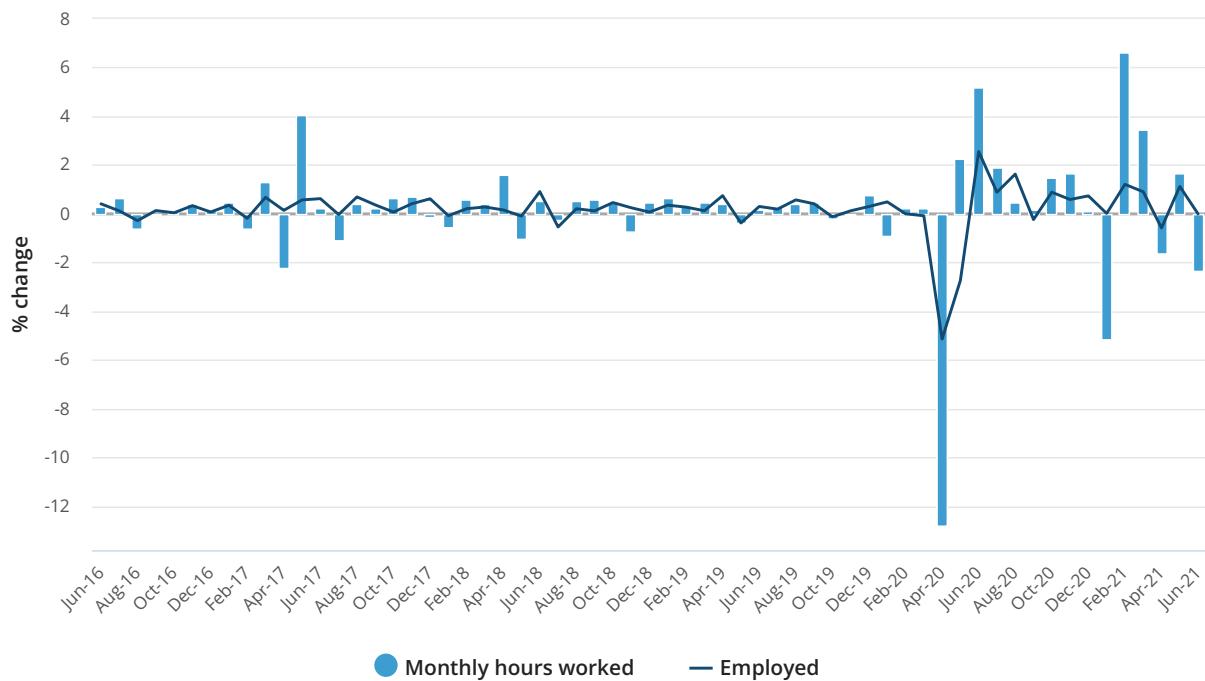
Changes in employment and hours worked for men and women

Table 2a: Monthly change in employment and hours worked, Males,
Seasonally adjusted



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

Table 2b: Monthly change in employment and hours worked, Females, Seasonally adjusted



Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

States and territories

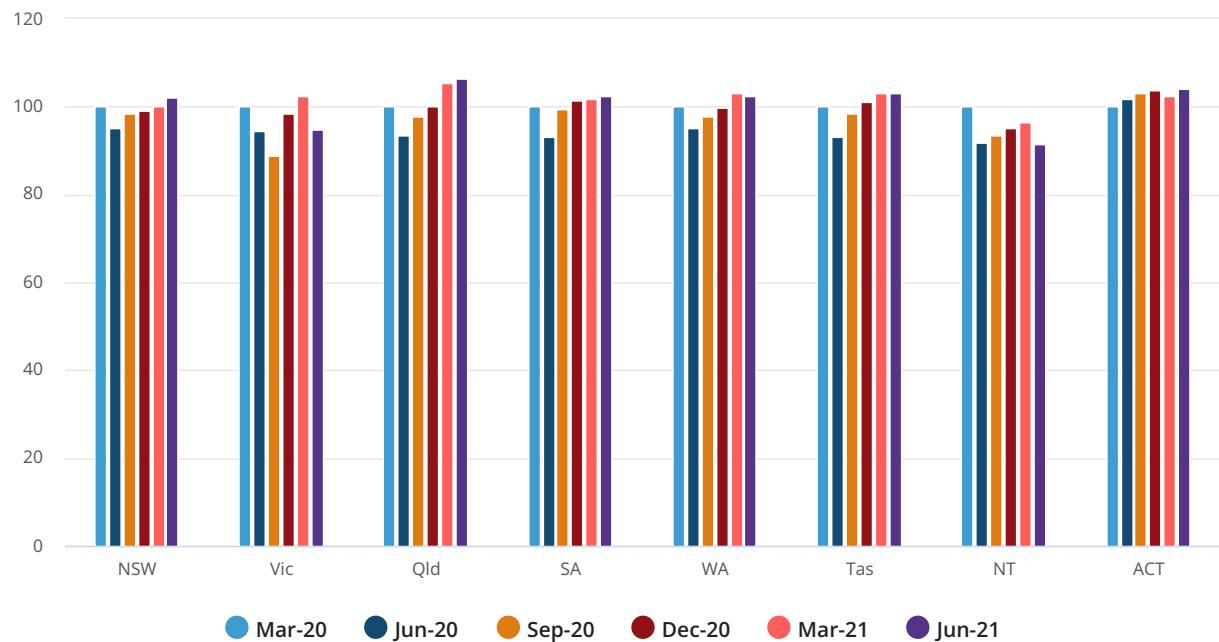
Chart 3 shows the changes in monthly hours worked at quarterly intervals for each of the states and territories, indexed to March 2020. Hours worked over the COVID period have been impacted by lockdowns and other restrictions that have been in place across the country. The lockdowns in Victoria in the second half of 2020 resulted in falls in hours worked in August and September, followed by periods of strong increases as Victoria recovered above the March 2020 level.

The most recent lockdown in Victoria saw a drop of nearly 40 million hours (8.4%) between May and June 2021, with the June level 5.1% lower than March 2020.

The Northern Territory has remained consistently below its March 2020 level, which partly reflects its employment and hours worked coming off a recent peak at that time, together

with the inherent variability in its seasonally adjusted data.

Chart 3: Monthly hours worked index, states and territories, seasonally adjusted (March 2020 = 100)



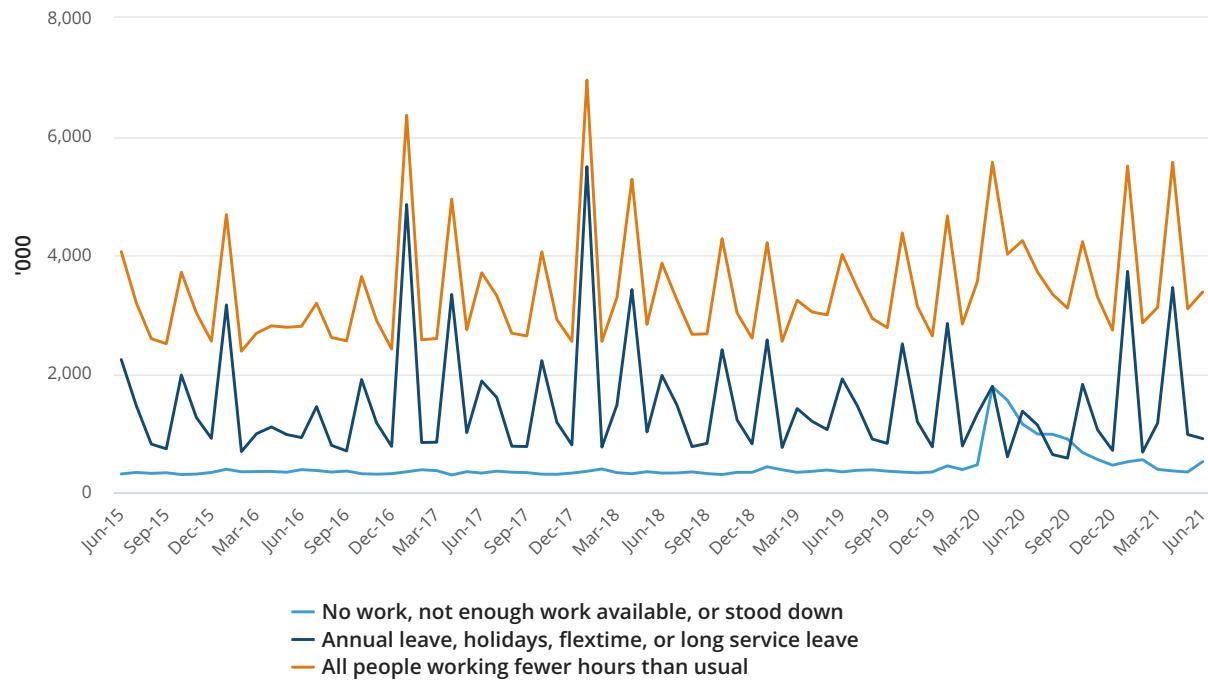
Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 19 and 19a

People working fewer hours

Chart 4 shows the number of people working fewer (or no) hours in June 2021:

- due to taking annual leave, holidays, flexitime, or long service leave - which was 907,700 people.
- due to economic reasons - which was 520,100 people. This was an increase of 175,900 (51%) from May 2021.

Chart 4: People working fewer than their usual hours, or no hours at all, Original

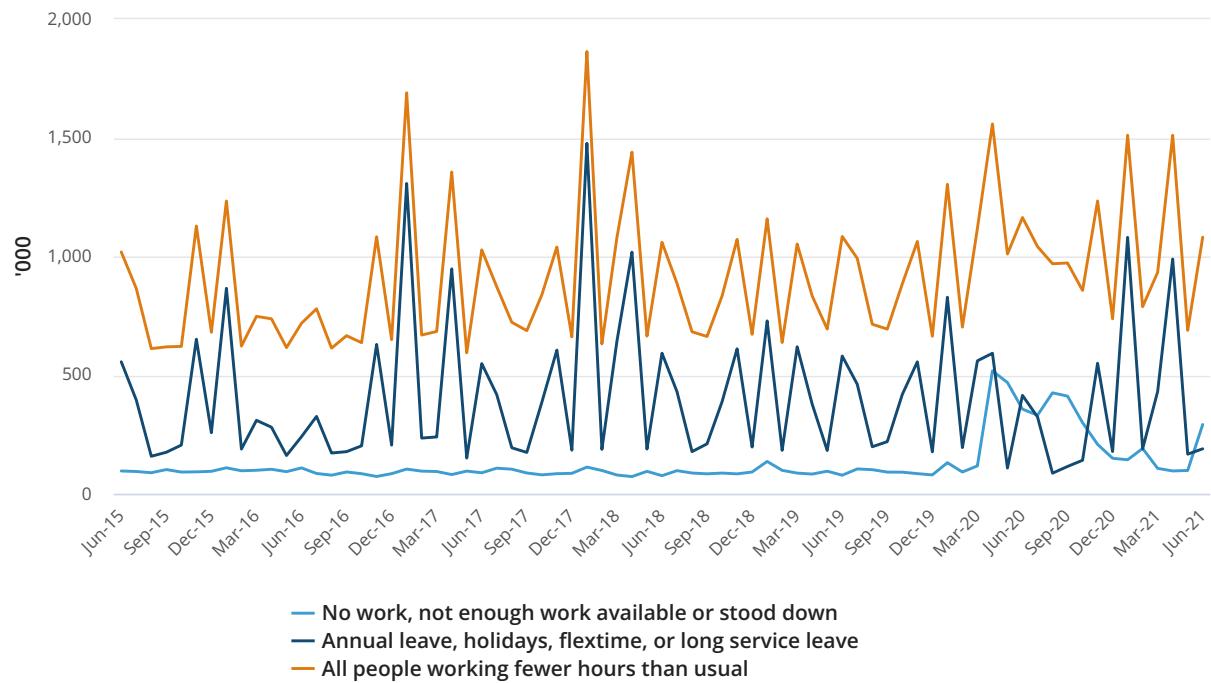


Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Data Cube EM2a

Chart 4a shows the number of people working fewer (or no) hours in June 2021 in Victoria:

- due to taking annual leave, holidays, flexitime, or long service leave - which was 189,600 people.
- due to economic reasons - which was 292,000 people. This was an increase of 193,600 from May 2021 and larger than the increase nationally.

Chart 4a: People working fewer than their usual hours in Victoria, Original

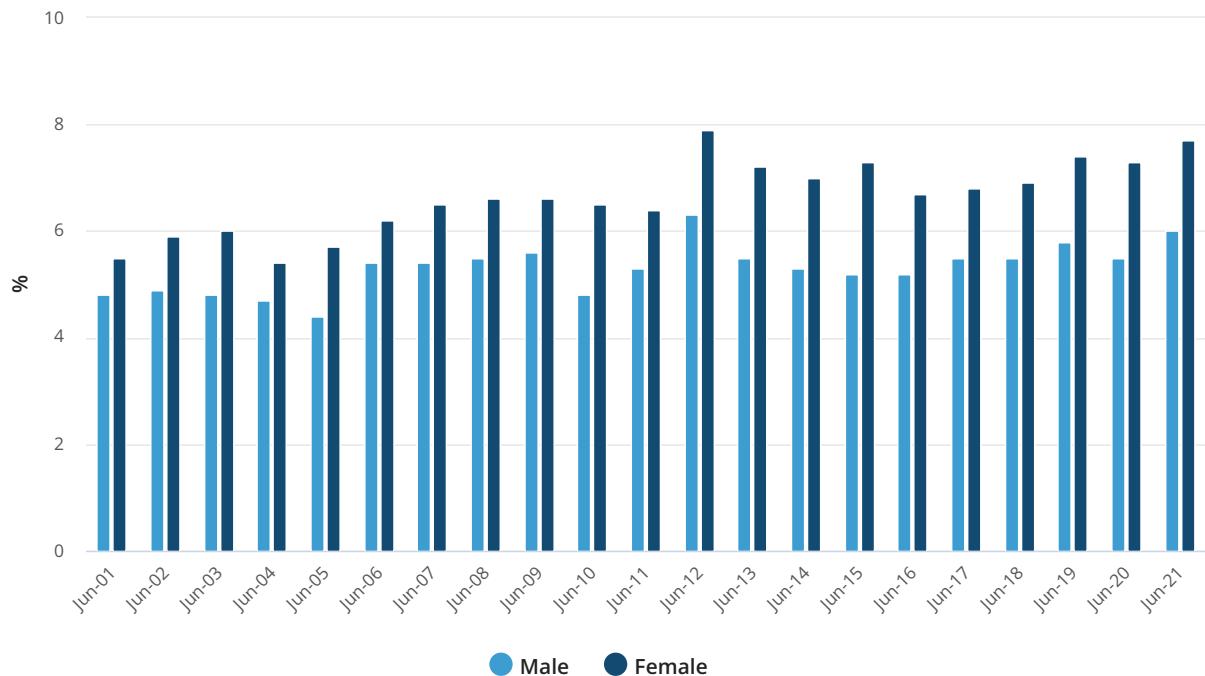


Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Data Cube EM2b

People working zero hours

Chart 5 shows the proportion of employed people who worked zero hours in June over the past 20 years. 6.8% of employed people worked zero hours in June 2021, with 11.1% of employed people in Victoria working zero hours.

Chart 5: Proportion of employed working zero hours, Original

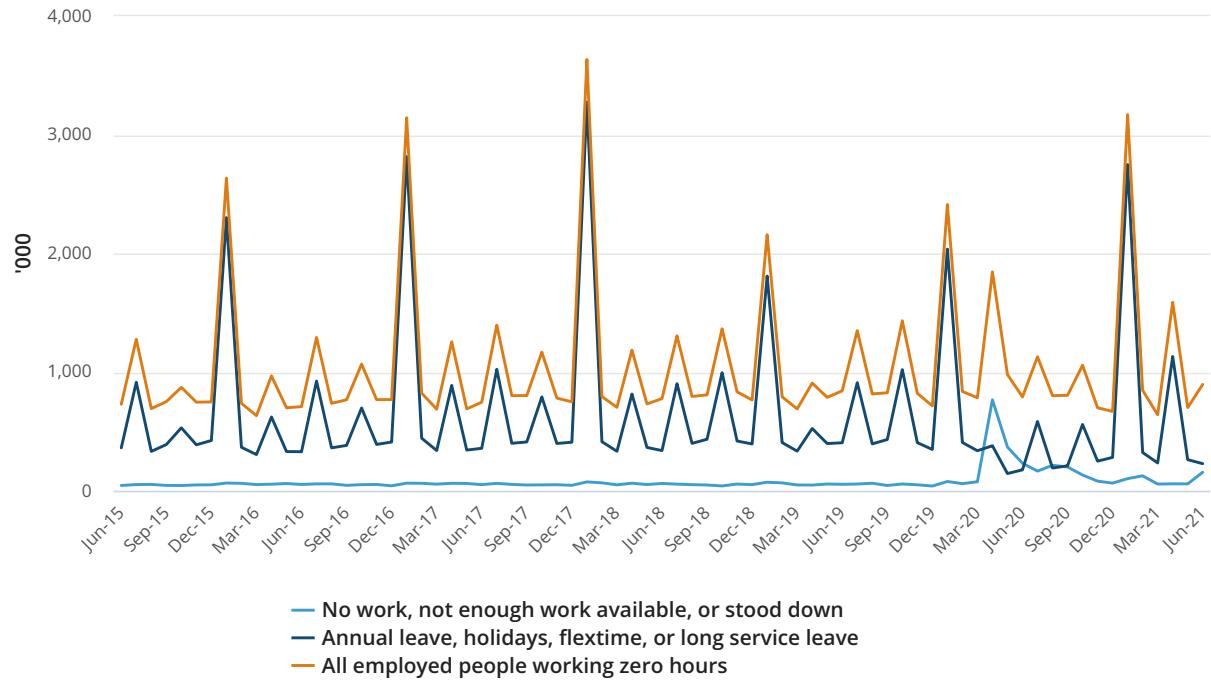


Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Table 9

Chart 6 shows the number of people working zero hours for economic reasons and due to taking annual leave, holidays, flextime, or long service leave. As with people working fewer hours, there is a distinct seasonal pattern to people taking leave, with large increases each January. In June 2021:

- 228,600 employed people worked zero hours due to taking annual leave, holidays, flextime, or long service leave.
- 156,500 employed people worked zero hours for economic reasons.

Chart 6: Employed people working zero hours, Original

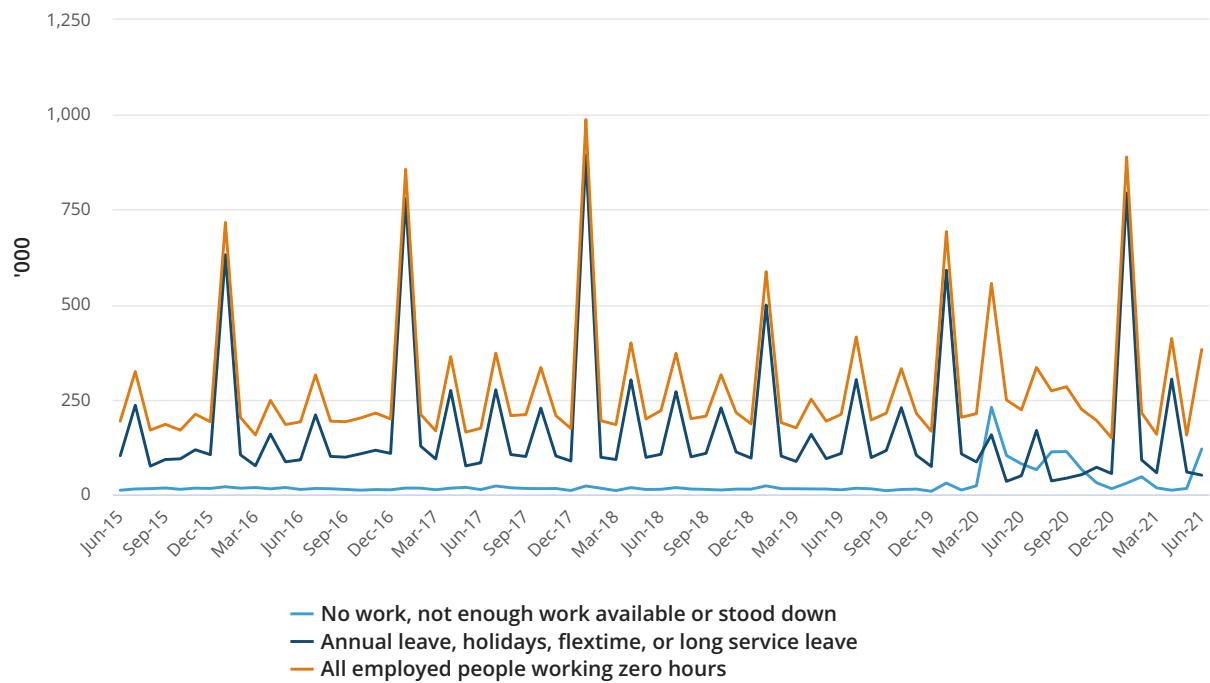


Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Data Cube EM2a

Chart 6a shows the number of employed people who worked zero hours in Victoria in June 2021:

- due to taking annual leave, holidays, flexitime, or long service leave - which was 50,800 people.
- due to economic reasons - which was 119,800 people. This was higher than in August and September 2020 when Victoria was in Stage 4 restrictions.

Chart 6a: Employed people working zero hours in Victoria, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Data Cube EM2b

Table 1 shows the number of employed people working zero hours for economic reasons in each state or territory, highlighting the very large increases in people working zero hours for economic reasons across the country in April 2020, and the second wave impacts in Victoria in August and September 2020. It also shows the effects of more recent lockdowns (eg. the lockdown in Western Australia in the first week of February 2021 and in Victoria in June 2021).

Table 1: Employed people working zero hours for economic reasons, by State and territory, Original

	NSW ('000)	Vic ('000)	Qld ('000)	SA ('000)	WA ('000)	Tas ('000)	NT ('000)	ACT ('000)	Australia ('000)
Mar-20	30.8	22.7	12.0	4.5	4.8	1.4	0.3	0.0	76.4
Apr-20	261.0	229.6	126.8	47.9	69.4	16.9	5.1	10.0	766.8

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
May-20	121.5	102.7	64.9	23.7	42.1	9.2	2.3	2.2	368.5
Jun-20	63.8	80.6	51.0	11.6	17.7	4.6	1.3	1.6	232.2
Jul-20	41.7	65.3	28.4	9.6	15.4	3.8	0.8	0.8	165.8
Aug-20	45.6	112.2	26.4	10.0	15.8	2.7	0.5	1.4	214.7
Sep-20	35.9	113.0	31.1	8.1	9.3	1.6	0.5	1.1	200.7
Oct-20	32.0	65.9	18.2	5.6	7.9	1.8	0.4	0.9	132.8
Nov-20	24.5	30.9	12.4	6.1	5.3	1.1	0.5	0.7	81.5
Dec-20	21.9	15.2	10.9	5.9	8.9	1.3	0.3	0.3	64.5
Jan-21	36.4	29.7	19.8	4.3	8.2	2.0	0.5	1.5	102.5
Feb-21	34.1	46.5	14.2	5.2	23.1	2.0	0.2	0.9	126.2
Mar-21	20.1	17.4	10.7	4.3	2.2	1.7	0.1	0.3	56.7
Apr-21	21.7	11.2	15.0	2.7	5.9	1.2	0.7	0.4	58.8
May-21	19.9	15.8	11.5	4.2	4.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	58.2
Jun-21	13.9	119.8	13.0	3.7	3.8	1.4	0.4	0.6	156.5

Source: Labour Force, Australia, Detailed Data Cube EM2b

Post-release changes

15 July 2021: Reasons for people working fewer than usual hours and zero hours for 'Began, left and lost a job' renamed to 'Began, left and lost a job and other'.

22 July 2021: Reasons for people working fewer than usual hours and zero hours for 'Began, left and lost a job' removed from Graph 4, 4a, 6 and 6a, and Table 2. Total reasons people working fewer and zero hours added. Please refer to the [June 2021 Labour Force, Australia Detailed \(<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/jun-2021>\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/jun-2021) release for more information.

For further information, email labour.statistics@abs.gov.au (<mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>).